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Seventeen articles present an overview of ideas dealing with many facets of school public relations. Topics singled out for coverage include (1) the importance of school public relations programs now and in the future: (2) potential contributions of citizens advisory committees; (3) formation and use of small-scale public opinion polls; (4) key factors in successful public relations programs for changing neighborhoods, culturally deprived areas, and school finance campaigns; (5) plans for effective information programs by State school officials; (6) an attitude survey revealing sharp differences in public attitudes depending on factors such as age, race, religion, education, and city size; (7) possible contributions of social scientists to school public relations programs; (8) hints for creating effective news reporting organizations; (9) public relations fallacies exposed by the programs of teacher associations; (10) pitfalls of borrowing designs and typographical ideas from business publications; (11) the necessity for viable internal communication; and (12) required leadership skills for public relations and the administrator's role. Forty-nine innovative public relations ideas from school systems around the country are offered, followed by a selected bibliography of 70 entries. Related documents are EA 001 921 (Volume 9) and EA 001 854 (Volume 10). (TT)

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PUBLIC RELATIONS

COLD MINE

vol. 8

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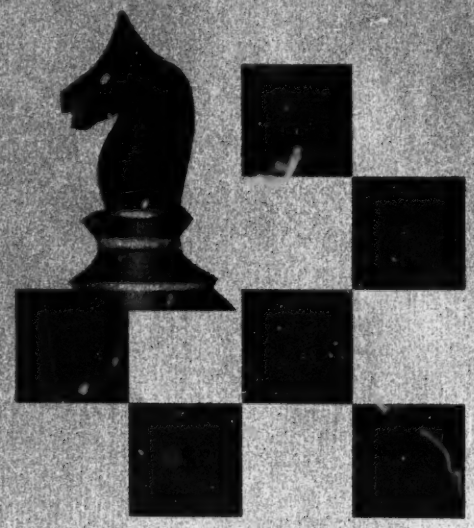

Strategy in School Finance Campaign Planning

. . . and other articles

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PUBLIC RELATIONS

GOLD MINE

vol. 8

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The articles appearing in the *Public Relations Gold Mine, Volume Eight,* present an overview of ideas expressed about the many facets of school public relations during the past year. These articles, in companion with those appearing in the first seven volumes of the *Public Relations Gold Mine* series, have been especially selected for their reference value to all members of the school staff whose responsibilities include school public relations.

We are particularly indebted to the following persons for permission to include material appearing in this volume: Martin Essex, superintendent, Akron (Ohio) public schools; Gene Lines, director, information services, Denver (Colo.) public schools; Loyd L. Turner, assistant to the president, General Dynamics, Fort Worth, Texas, and president, Fort Worth School Board.

Several chapters appeared originally as articles in *Trends,* a school public relations newsletter published by the National School Public Relations Association and edited by Robert Olds. Dee Preusch serves as editor of the *Gold Mine* series.

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A SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT LOOKS AT PUBLIC RELATIONS

I have been asked to speak about public relations from three viewpoints: school board president, industrial executive, and communicator. I shall try to wear these three hats, without attempting to correlate the hats with the viewpoints.

I would also like to make quite clear at the outset that I consider public relations no less important in a school system than in a large corporation like the one with which I am associated. As a matter of fact, public relations is probably more important in a school system, because progress in public education is so directly related to public opinion.

The days are about gone—and it's high time—when school superintendents and school boards could get away with telling the public only what they thought the public should know.

The schools belong to the public—not to the superintendent and not to the school board—and the public has a right to know what's happening in them. The schools can't move any faster than public opinion will permit; so an informed public is a prerequisite to progress.

If you try to lead too fast as a board member, you'll not get re-elected. If you try to lead too fast as a superintendent, you'll get fired.

Changes come slowly in education, perhaps too slowly, but good boards of education can help to accelerate this rate of change. Other forces are already at work to cause change—the population explosion, the knowledge explosion, increased emphasis on education at state and national levels, and teachers' efforts to participate to some degree in decision-making.

Board members have a definite role to play in this area of public relations and communication. Good members will be able to reflect to the superintendent the attitudes of the community, and interpret school policies and programs to the community. (As with school superintendents and public relations directors, most of the 137,000 school board members in the United States

are good; a few are bad, and some are indifferent. Theirs is a great responsibility, for they deal with a parent's most precious possessions—his children and his pocketbook.)

Here's why all of this attention to public relations and communication make sense. Communication leads to understanding; understanding leads to broader public support; and broader public support leads to progress in education.

Boston, or Fort Worth, or Anywhere can have just as good a school system as it wants—and not one bit better.

I stress this point, because in practical meetings like National School Public Relations Association seminars, some participants may get involved with the mechanics and the nuts and bolts of public relations and lose sight of the big picture.

Incidentally, this is my first NSPRA seminar, although I'm a card-carrying member of the organization and proud of it. I'm proud of it not only because I'm in accord with its basic purposes of promoting a better understanding of education but also because its publications are some of the best available. I have read all seven volumes of *Public Relations Gold Mine,* all seven volumes of *The Shape of Education,* all of the other NSPRA handbooks for school personnel, and all of the handbooks for parents. On the flight up here I read *The Schools and the Press;* yesterday in the hotel, I listened to the two records on *How To Study and Why!;* and I own a copy of the filmstrip *School Birds.*

But what benefits me most, I think, are the newsletters, particularly *Education U.S.A.* This newsletter tells me as much as I want to know about current educational affairs and sometimes makes me appear smarter than I am.

Some of my friends wonder why I read so much about education, and why I regularly attend the state and national conventions of school administrators and school board members. The answer is simply that I—and an increasing number of school board members—feel that one of the functions of a school board is leadership, and it's difficult if not impossible to lead without being informed. A good school board will lead the public in demanding higher educational levels in its district and state. Board members have as much responsibility as anybody—and more responsibility than most people—for building broader support, fuller understanding, and deeper commitment to public education. I don't say this because I should, but because I believe it.

You people know, perhaps better than I, that public interest in education has increased tremendously in recent years. This has resulted in a lot of criticism of public education, some enlightened and some not so enlightened. Self-appointed critics are abroad in the land. It behooves us, then, as board members and administrators, to know as much as possible about what is going on in education.

In the years ahead there is going to be more interest in, criticism of, and controversy surrounding education than many educators would

like. But they have little choice if they stay in the profession. It's sort of like the inveterate poker player—he knew the game was crooked, but it was the only game in town.

This is no time for superintendents with their feet in the past, their hands on the status quo, and their eyes on retirement. Neither is it a time for board members more interested in avoiding controversy than in providing an up-to-date education for the boys and girls in their school district.

Most of you know, as I know, that *public relations is more of an art than a science and more a way of life than either.*

I will not insult your intelligence by attempting a one-sentence definition of what school public relations *is,* but I will tell you what it *does.* It seeks to bring about a harmony of understanding between the school and the public it serves *and upon whose goodwill it depends.* This calls for a two-way flow of ideas between school and community. School public relations should be a systematic, continuing series of activities for educating people in a community to the purposes of the school—its programs, accomplishments, and problems.

Public relations has come a long way since the days when it was considered a sort of public deodorant that you pour around where it stinks.

You people realize as well as I that it is no longer a question of whether a public school system will have public relations. It's a question of whether those relations will be good or bad.

Good public relations are the result of good policies, whether in education, industry, government, or what-have-you. If your basic policies are right, your public relations problems are likely to be minor. If your basic policies are wrong, your public relations problems are likely to be major and perhaps insurmountable.

You may have heard of the dog food manufacturer that reportedly put a new product on the market following a lavish advertising and publicity campaign and using well-established distribution outlets. When sales lagged and profits vanished, the company president called in sales managers from the field to find out what was the matter. They told him that there was nothing wrong with the campaign or the salesmen, but as for the new product, the dogs just didn't like it.

The superintendent of schools, no matter how large or small the system, is primarily responsible for the public relations function, just as the president of a large corporation is generally responsible for the public relations function. Both of them may, and frequently do, have professional help in handling the function, but the responsibility will always be theirs.

For this reason, if for no other, the public relations director in education or industry, by whatever title he is called, should report only to the top man.

From this vantage point, the public relations director can frequently apply public relations as a preventive rather than a cure. It is cheaper

and easier that way.

In public schools, as in industry, public relations should begin at home. The employees of the school system—the principals, the teachers, the secretaries, the custodians, and all the rest—are the school system's most important public. A close second are the pupils, followed by the parents and the taxpayers in general.

Teachers, in my opinion, are the most important single factor in good school-community relations regardless of whether they realize it or whether their principals ever told them so. When public relations in your school system rests on a foundation of sound classroom accomplishment, it's like a house built on a rock. Storms of ill-founded criticism will not overwhelm it.

Teachers have constant access to the most direct line of communication—pupils. Teachers are not teachers by day and public relations agents by night. They are necessarily both at the same time.

I am just enough of an optimist to believe that many teachers are beginning to carry their share of the public relations load.

More and more teachers are realizing that today's pupils are tomorrow's taxpayers, PTA leaders, legislators, school board members, or other influential persons in the community and state. Schools that serve them well can depend on their continued loyalty and support.

The knowledge explosion, coupled with the population explosion, will require more teachers and better teachers. They will have to teach better and they will have to teach more. Obviously, we will have to pay teachers more in order to attract and keep them. Good teachers, probably more so than good school boards, make good schools, although it's hard to imagine one without the other.

Nowhere is this knowledge explosion dramatized better than in *Schools for the Sixties,* a National Education Association report. This report proposes that the accelerating growth in knowledge be plotted against a time line ranging from the birth of Christ to the present. "The first doubling of knowledge occurred in 1750, the second in 1900, the third in 1950, and the fourth only 10 years later, 1960!"

Ideally, public relations consciousness should permeate every level of the school system—not just board members and the superintendent, not just principals and teachers, but consultants, counselors, coaches, directors, nurses, secretaries, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, and all of the others.

Ideally, too, communication should flow up as well as it flows down and sideways. Unfortunately, few school systems—and few corporations—achieve this ideal. But it presents a challenge that all of us can continue to work on.

In Fort Worth, we don't have the answers to all of the public relations problems in education, and we don't claim to. If any of you people have a handy-dandy, do-it-yourself kit for handling public relations, I would like to buy one. In fact, I would like to obtain the

Southwest distributorship.

I'll not recite all of the things which we do on the public relations front in Fort Worth. Most of them are very similar to what you do. But I would like to mention two or three.

We recognize the importance of public relations to our school system in Fort Worth. The board of education recognizes it; the superintendent recognizes it; and many of our 4,700 employees recognize it.

Our board meetings are always "open" and are always covered by the press. All official actions of the board are taken in public. We keep so-called "executive sessions" to a minimum and restrict them to personnel and real estate matters. Open meetings encourage trust and stimulate confidence in the school board. Trust and confidence, in turn, lead to understanding and support by the community. Understanding and support, again in turn, lead to a high-quality school system.

The superintendent, because he came up through the public relations ranks, realizes that there is no substitute for face-to-face communication. He makes a concerted effort to get out of his office a reasonable amount of time and go where the action is—in the principals' offices, in the classrooms, in the service clubs, and in civic projects.

He does these things, and the board encourages him, because he knows that education needs dynamic public support. He knows that it is only through the full cooperation of board members, superintendents, principals, teachers, taxpayers, and legislators that we can achieve our goal of providing the best possible education for every child. This is true in Boston, in Fort Worth, and the nation over.

We devote quite a bit of time, effort, and money to the preparation and distribution of an eight-page monthly publication called the *Superintendent's Journal* because it is the single most important communication with all of our employees. The *Journal* also goes to a select list of 1,500 civic and women's club presidents; PTA officers; business, professional, and trade organization officers; all news media; community leaders throughout the city and state; and the superintendents of all large city school systems in the United States.

We also devote time and effort each year to promoting Public Schools Week, as part of a statewide effort to get citizens into the public schools to see firsthand what's going on. This year—through open houses, dads' nights, special student assemblies, exhibits, and a series of bus tours — we attracted 250,000 visitors during Public Schools Week, leading the state for the fifteenth straight time. That's more than three visitors for each child in our public school system. During this week, we distribute 60,000 special full-color brochures telling the school story.

It is hard to measure the results of these and our various other public relations principles and practices, because public relations is largely an intangible. But I can cite you one very tangible result, a result that probably would not have occurred

without a steady public relations effort. In four separate elections since World War II, Fort Worth citizens have approved by overwhelming odds the issuance of more than $71 million in bonds for construction of new schools. The most recent of these elections, calling for the issuance of $27 million in bonds to build 17 air-conditioned schools, passed by a 7 to 1 ratio.

I was asked to wear only three hats today—school board president, industrial executive, and communicator. But I would like to don very briefly a fourth hat—that of forecaster—and list five more educational developments that will concern NSPRA members, superintendents, and board members during the next decade.

(1) *The federal government will get more and more involved in education.* Even those who dislike the idea—and their name is legion—may resignedly come to the conclusion that when federal aid is inevitable, they should relax and enjoy it. Local school boards conceivably could be flattened beneath a federally financed steamroller, making local control of schools the "myth" which some professional educators and others wish it were.

(2) *Community (junior) colleges will come into their own.* There are about 700 of them in the nation today, and I expect the number to double during my lifetime.

(3) *The number of school districts will decrease.* More and more small school districts, in my opinion, will grudgingly admit that they cannot provide a first-class education for their children, leading to mergers.

(4) *More and more school systems will put their public relations programs on an organized basis,* as increasing numbers of boards and superintendents realize the importance of the function in upgrading education. (A friend of mine recently published a pamphlet entitled *The Next Decade—The Communicator's Oyster.)*

(5) *The areas of education that will receive the most emphasis in the next decade are preschool education, vocational and technical training, and adult education.* Item re preschool education: Recent research indicates that intelligence is more susceptible to development than was formerly supposed if the development is started early enough. Item re vocational and technical training: Fifty years ago common laborers outnumbered professional workers three to one; today that ratio has been reversed. Items re adult education: There are 11 million functional illiterates in the United States; one fourth of all Americans have not finished high school and one million more are dropping out each year.

Now, I would like to remove all four hats, and as a bare-headed fellow member of NSPRA, wish you well in your efforts to promote a better understanding of education, which is—in the words of the late President John F. Kennedy—"the most profitable investment society can make and the richest reward it can confer."

THE PRICE OF ADVICE

Look for a continuing upsurge in citizen committee and staff advisory activity. It's happening because of the seriousness of the communications problem . . . because of employee group agitation for formal participation in policy determination . . . because local support has become elusive . . . because wise top school administrators know that planned involvement and face-to-face communication can pay handsome dividends.

Superintendent William M. Brish, Washington County Schools, Hagerstown, Maryland, told the first conference held by a new district citizens committee on education that because education is an outgrowth of community life, educators must seek the advice of citizens in developing the educational program. The conference was well planned and organized, a significant characteristic of many recent citizen advisory ventures. Frank Harlacher, public information coordinator for the school system, serves as a continuing adviser to the group and a link with the system. Outside consultants, with direct citizen committee service, have also provided counsel for the committee. With this background, the committee studies major school

problem areas and makes recommendations to the school board.

"As our organization becomes more complex, and our teaching duties more demanding, there is an increasing need for the chief executive to relate closely with the thoughts and feelings of classroom teachers," Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Superintendent Sidney P. Marland Jr. told his staff. "We need to provide a clear channel for the exercise of initiative, creativity, and responsibility by the teaching profession."

One device which Marland has developed to help meet the problem is a 15-member Professional Advisory Commission, composed largely of classroom teachers, which meets monthly for depth discussions about policy questions confronting the Pittsburgh system. The school system has published an attractive leaflet describing the Commission's initial year of operation.

Many of the unhappy experiences with early citizens committees resulted from failure by school officials to see that committee purposes, status, and relationships with the board were clearly spelled out in writing. Such fumbles now are rare. The ground rules for the new citizens advisory committee at Tarkio, Missouri, for example, cover three typewritten pages.

Success with an advisory effort virtually demands strong top management support. One example is a 20-page source book prepared for 18 citizen seminars held at Akron, Ohio. About 500 community leaders were involved. The outcome of a similar project at Columbus, Ohio, was reported in a series of three leaflets sent home with report cards.

"Perhaps the greatest single benefit that our citizens committee has provided is good public relations," said Mrs. Ione Gaeth, Westlake, Ohio, school board member, about a 12-member advisory group (three-year terms) which has been in operation since 1958. "The interest of committee members in the affairs of the schools continues after their years of active service are completed, and these many citizens, with their contacts in varied groups, are a growing support for the school system."

The Westlake advisory committee was formed initially to help plan a new high school building, but remained at the board's request to advise about many other problems. Subcommittees have worked on development of a community newsletter, speakers bureau materials, recruitment brochure, junior high school evaluation, community resources, policy manual, orientation, etc. The group meets monthly and frequently receives formal briefings by staff members.

GUIDELINES FOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE MANAGEMENT

Here are tips by Superintendent Frank M. Walter, Westlake, Ohio, which can make your efforts with advisory groups more profitable in terms of effective action and smooth operation:

1. Don't ask any advisory com-

mittee to deal with easy problems. Committees are more successful when they work on hard ones, especially those problems which school boards have been unable to solve.

2. Don't coax anyone to serve unless he agrees to attend every meeting and to give his full effort.

3. Avoid choosing persons who stand to profit personally from committee action or who have to clear their votes with any organization they may represent.

4. Don't worry about selecting persons who are not experts or even especially well informed about the problem under study; pick those who are intelligent, objective, and favorably known to a substantial segment of the persons concerned with the problem.

5. Keep the first few meetings limited to clarification of the understanding of committee members. Provide basic, factual information, *well prepared*. An effort must be made to be certain that every member is familiar with the background information.

6. Committee meetings should be held at a place which assures good working conditions but which is not too attractive or comfortable.

7. Begin the discussions only after the presentation of facts has been completed, which may require more than one meeting. After the discussion period begins, the chairman should make sure at the conclusion of each meeting that he reviews and pegs down the points upon which agreement has been reached. There also should be kept, for later discussion, a list of the points of disagreement.

8. One of the chairman's big tasks, from the beginning to the end of the committee's assignment, is to remind the group that its goal is the solution of the problem and not the writing of a report "to be abandoned, like a foundling child, on the doorstep of some other agency."

9. The report should be designed with the objective of broadening the knowledge and understanding of the problem on the part of the board of education and citizens and to encourage and equip the board to take effective action upon the recommendations of the committee.

10. The report which emerges from the work of the advisory group should be as attractive and as readable as it can be made. If funds are limited, let the skimping take place elsewhere and not penalize the quality of the report. The report should be written in clear, concise language. One of the reasons why committee reports often gather dust is their fuzzy, inept writing and bargain basement publication budget.

SANE STAFF STUDIES

It's faddish now in education to talk glibly about communications. Confidently, it is offered as the latest cure-all for about every problem. Most sensible is a continuing project by the communications-wise Prince George's County District, Upper Marlboro, Maryland. Superintendent William S. Schmidt has had in operation for more than three years a special "Committee To Study the

Problem of Communications," composed of 14 central office staff members and principals or vice-principals. Problems of effective communication among central office and school-based staff members caused the establishment of the group.

Studies in several areas have been conducted by the committee. A staff poll, made in 1963, disclosed that growth and increased complexity of the system had generated a great expansion of internal communication channels. "We found we were now such a large staff that veteran members as well as newcomers found it difficult to keep up with the committees, meetings, bulletins, and memoranda that had become the necessary instruments for clarifying and carrying out our daily responsibilities," said Margaret M. Conant, chairman of the committee.

A special subcommittee was assigned the task of sorting out existing communication channels, the idea being that identification could help the staff make better use of them. "The extent to which a staff utilizes communication media within a school system not only affects the program of education but also influences the concomitant development of a program of good school-community relations," said Schmidt.

Three main categories of communication channels were listed by the committee: (1) originating (downward), (2) interacting (horizontal), and (3) responding (upward). "Channels must be kept open and active in all three directions if effective communication is to be achieved," the committee observed in a handbook produced for the staff. "This realistic concept of the importance of three channels in communication is far more comprehensive than the restrictive concept of one person or group 'writing, telling, or selling' others who are neither encouraged to react nor provided with a formal opportunity to do so."

Two dozen different staff committees were found to be at work in planning, studies, and policy development for the school district. Minimum standards of quality and uniformity were recommended governing notices of committee meetings, organization agenda, reports, recommendations, and records. Samples were included in the handbook.

Six different kinds of group meetings were identified, including board meetings and those scheduled for central officer personnel and administrators. Tips were offered for meetings of this type, with special advice for meetings at which plans are to be made for additional group meetings at other levels.

Twenty-two different system publications were listed with description of format, content, and distribution. Quality standards were offered for basic editing and layout functions, with more elaborate detail about the preparation of basic office bulletins, staff bulletins, and memos.

Basic standards also were given for school system correspondence. A description was given of the inter-building school delivery service. Included also were a description of 10 external groups having school system representation and an organization chart of the system.

THE LITTLE POLL

One of the dandy little tools in your PR kit can be the opinion poll. It's not always necessary to think of pulse-taking in vast Gallup-like proportions. You can scale the techniques down to a size which can be managed easily to accomplish a variety of chores. Many polls do not require fancy sample-taking or highly technical framing of questions. Sometimes it's just a case of asking for advice and comments. Postal cards or a single sheet of paper will do.

The Massillon, Ohio, system, for example, checked up on its recruiting and orientation program in a most logical fashion. After completing one semester, teachers new to the system were asked to respond to a five-question poll prior to a discussion meeting. Teachers were asked to identify most decisive factors in seeking a position with the system, plus evaluations of recruitment materials, techniques, and the orientation program. Superintendent John Ellis said one of the chief objectives was to identify points to be given most emphasis in the current recruiting effort.

For a quick updating of the parent mailing list for the system newsletter, *The Notebook,* PR coordinator Al Sposato, Connetquot Central Schools, Bohemia, New York, arranged to send a note home with pupils. As a bright extra thought, parents were asked not only about whether they had received the newsletter but also to give their comments about the publication if they

had received it. The 600 returned forms included 183 comments, some of which included content suggestions or pointed up delivery problems.

A selected sample sometimes can be used rather than broadside polling, if the kind of information sought makes this possible. Mary Ericsson, PR director, Pittsburg, California, schools, worked with principals of seven elementary schools to query parents of children in the second and fifth grades about their most effective school news information sources.

Notes brought home by pupils easily rated first, followed by comments from children. Third best source was the daily newspaper, with school publications in fourth place. Then came PTA meetings, radio news, and an area metropolitan newspaper. Most helpful to the PR director were some of the clues revealed by the responses. Neighborhood patterns differed. In one section, where newspaper circulation was light, radio listening was unusually heavy.

The value of PTA meetings as information channels also was apparent. Differences of ratings at various schools pointed up the importance of content in PTA program planning. Parents of second-grade youngsters read the newspaper more regularly for school news than did those with fifth-grade children. Recommendations made in the wake of this poll included the publication of a regular newsletter by each building, making a special effort to cover curriculum and policy items which might not be published in the community newspaper. Take-home notes for lower grades received special attention.

Four teachers at Franklin Junior High School, Green Bay, Wisconsin, sampled student opinion at different levels, and polled parents, as well, to get views about homework and study practices being followed. They reported at a faculty meeting after surveying 200 students and tabulating responses from 74 percent of the parents. The teachers found unanimity in many respects but also learned about wide variations in time spent on homework and home study conditions.

A comprehensive community-wide parent poll conducted by the Wheaton, Illinois, schools afforded the school board important information for future planning, according to Assistant Superintendent Ernest Poe. A highly illustrated summary was produced to report the main findings. A team of board members and administrators presented the data and related information to the staff and community groups.

Adapted from a transcription of remarks by Gene Lines at the 1965 National School Public Relations Association Seminar. Mr. Lines, 1964-65 NSPRA president, is director of information services, Denver, Colorado, Public Schools.

A LOOK AHEAD FOR SCHOOL PUBLIC RELATIONS

There is only one principal idea imbedded in what I am going to say. This is: Time.

Today we face seven seemingly unrelated things, situations which I believe you should know about. I am aware of them. I am disturbed by them—and they *do* have a relationship.

The first fact is this: We are due now for a large wave of children, new enrollments in the public schools of this country. What has happened is that the earlier wave of enrollments had begun to ebb in 1961. By 1963 there were many school systems in the country which showed losses, and in 1964 we were at the bottom of the trough. We are still at the bottom.

But now the next wave begins. President Johnson, when he spoke at the National Education Association convention, oversimplified the problem when he said that by 1970 we shall have 5 million more pupils in the public schools. We will need 400,000 classrooms. He stopped at the 1970 projection because that is where his agency—Health, Education, and Welfare—stops. However, other figures show that by 1973 we will have 15 million more youngsters in school. I shall elaborate on this statement later.

Fact number two: We in education have no spokesman—no one person who speaks for us. As far as the public is concerned, we have no spokesman. As far as the entire profession is concerned, we have many.

Point number three is this: Our leaders in education are retiring. Consequently, we are going through a changing of the guard. Some 70 percent of the superintendents in our large cities will retire between 1964 and 1968. Of the executive secretaries of state professional organizations, 68 percent will retire within

the next four years. Although actual figures are difficult to obtain, 50 to 60 percent of the chief state school officers will be retiring. Most important, the NEA executive secretary and several of the assistant executive secretaries (60 percent) will leave within the next five years. In fact, that process has already begun.

The fourth fact: Our profession is in the midst of a soul-searching endeavor, much of it linked to a phrase that is common these days, "the increased militancy of teachers." Events are occurring in rapid succession throughout the country, based upon this question: What is the role of a teacher; how much "say" should the teacher have in administering the schools? It is a question which, in its initial stages, seems to be creating a division between administrators and teachers. And particularly, in its initial stages, some people are predicting that within 10 years the NEA will be a teacher organization; administrators will have their own.

The fifth fact consists of the perpetual question: Where is the money coming from? One of the best financed organizations in the country is now devoting its time to selling the public on this one statement: The property tax has reached its limit. We must find other sources of income.

Now, the sixth fact: Again, the fact is a question. What are the solutions to the problems of de facto segregation? This I shall not belabor, but it is a problem which faces us.

Fact number seven: President Johnson's interest has spurred Congress to implement his belief that education is a tool of social change. We all know that the various education acts of 1965 form the most challenging event of modern times. As an aside, I should mention that we are caught in our own culture. This is a culture which believes that if you are given a million dollars to do a job in one year, given two million dollars you can do it in six months.

Here we are: We have another growth surge coming; we do not have a spokesman; our leaders are retiring; we have an internal problem; we have the problem of support; and we have the problem of integration. Perhaps we could wait on the first six problems, but President Johnson's action has now produced a desperate situation. It is this: We would have to have the naïveté of a child not to realize that three years from this November we will be faced with a day of reckoning. The entire Johnson Administration will be under question, and his program for education certainly will be a major issue. This major issue might even be lost . . . lost because things are being done in a hurry, a great hurry. And when things are done in a hurry, mistakes are made. Sometimes these mistakes come back to haunt us.

The first question three years from now will be: What have you done with the millions you were given? This question immediately moves us into another arena, which I have heard best described by this statement, "Politically, we as a pro-

fession will be forced into a political position not chosen by us." Already we know, three years before the date arrives, that as a profession we have a political commitment of defense of a political program. I have gone back as far as possible, and I can find no precedent for the political position our profession is in today. At no time could I find a unanimity of opinion such as is evidenced by the desire to use the federal money.

I am sure that President Johnson had these thoughts in mind when he appeared at the NEA convention. Why am I sure? Because he said the same thing three times. In one instance, and I am paraphrasing, he said, "For years you have said what you could do if you had money. You now have the money." And he has said there will be more money. At another time, the President stated, "The time for talk has passed. Now is the time to work and to produce." His sense of urgency and the element of *time* are important. We, too, must become aware of this urgent matter of *time*. President Johnson is deadly serious. He is looking ahead. Are we?

I shall now review the seven points briefly and present one or two suggestions which may make some sense.

About the matter of growth. We are faced with a tremendous growth surge. President Johnson oversimplified when he said that between 1965 and 1970 we will have five million more pupils. It's a true statement but it gives the impression of a million a year, which is not true. That five million which President Johnson talked about will come very largely in the opening of the school year 1968, then the school years '69, and '70, and on through '73 will bring the devastating surge. I do not intend to argue with him and his figures, however, because his basic ideas of urgency and time are problems that still remain.

I shall combine points two and three: leaders in education and the fact that we have no spokesman. This is important, the fact that our leaders are retiring. I would like to quote Loyd Turner, Fort Worth, Texas, school board president: "It is unreasonable to assume that a man who is facing retirement is as interested in the future as would be a man of a different age status."

What can we do about this problem of leadership? We can start now to alert ourselves, our peers, and our organizations to the fact that the people who are being elected to office now in these organizations, particularly the professional organizations, will determine who the successors of the present holders of office will be. I know of three large cities in this country whose school board elections this year had, as a major campaign issue, the fact that school board members now being elected would take part in the most important function of a school board —the selection of a superintendent. This campaign issue produced serious overtones at the elections and, in my opinion, had an effect upon the people's choice for school board members.

This can be accomplished in state education associations, it can be

done with chief state school officers and, more particularly, with the NEA. I believe, incidentally, that the replacement for William G. Carr, when he retires as executive secretary of the NEA, will probably be the most important decision, as far as we in our profession are concerned, made in the past 10 to 12 years. This decision will affect at least a generation to come because the man who replaces Dr. Carr—what he believes and his plan of action—will affect public education for years to come.

As far as internal soul-searching is concerned, the public is both bewildered and, at the same time, disinterested. They do not understand it and are confused by the fact that education, all of a sudden, would seem to have two spokesmen. By virtue of what might be called "ring strategy," in boxing parlance, two groups have been forced into separate corners of the ring. Practically the only thing they do is to misunderstand one another. Each tells his side as he sees it. The public fails to see much difference.

I would like to relate this point to President Johnson's program. We are either going to have to settle our internal differences soon—the matter of *time* again—or we are not going to be able to do the job we are supposed to be doing. It has been suggested that the NEA should call a conference, along the lines of a White House Conference, to talk with all leaders in education, to explain what the NEA program is, explain what a department of urban affairs is, explain what has taken place, and to come up with a policy statement which will include everyone in education. There are those who talk about the NEA becoming a teacher organization, with the administrators having to find their own organization. I do not accept this view. I think we all belong, and can belong, in one organization. I believe our goals, ultimately, are the same. The seriousness of this question has been magnified because of the speed with which it has taken place. But I do feel the NEA owes it to its members, almost a million now, to meet, to discuss, and to report.

As for money (this is point number five), we must seek other sources of income and convince people that we are deserving of these sources.

Point number six: the problems of intégration and segregation. There are some who say that not in our generation will we be able to solve this. There are some who feel that Chicago gets the headlines, while other school systems in other cities are working it out. I do not know about this, but I do know we are all working on it and not one of us has the answer as yet.

Point number seven, the Johnson program. If you know that in three years there is going to be a reckoning, as I have mentioned earlier, does it not behoove you to keep records? Personally, as a public information director in Denver, I use a very simple device—a loose-leaf notebook. On each page is the name of a program. On the left side is the date, in the middle is the amount of money, to the right is

what happened to the money. Then a number is assigned. As these programs produce reports, they are filed behind the notebook. It is that simple.

I already have been asked many questions concerning federal funds we have received and how they're being used. It is very comforting to be able to pull out my records and go over it with the person who is looking for answers.

To sum up, the Johnson program again has been a catalyst for all of these six problems. We could handle these problems, one at a time, but I feel we should recognize and not underestimate the magnitude of the combined problems: A divided profession, the lack of a spokesman, our leadership retiring, schools regarded as a tool of social change, the need for new means of financial support, and the fact that we are faced with a tremendously large growth in number of children. It is a challenge. I am quite sure we will succeed in solving these problems, because (1) we are dedicated to this profession; it is our way of life. The second reason we will succeed is because we cannot fail. If we fail to work out the solutions to the seven situations I have outlined, there are others who will do it for us —in their way.

President Johnson's statement could come back to haunt us: "You've been talking for years what you could do with money, now you have it." The central idea of what I have to say is this: This is the time; let's do something about it.

SCHOOL IN A CHANGING NEIGHBORHOOD— A PR CHALLENGE

In most fancy neighborhoods, the school building public relations program can be a snap. By contrast, it appears that the successful school PR program in a changing neighborhood or culturally deprived area depends much upon what the principal knows about PR principles and how hard he works to apply them. Moreland Elementary School, which serves a fast-changing area of swank Shaker Heights, Ohio, demonstrates the kind of hard-driving, imaginative administrative effort which may be required.

Principal Orville J. Jenkins sees the Moreland PR job as being a continuous challenge to build a positive image of the school and its educational program in a transient, integrated, relatively low socioeconomic neighborhood. The big effort is to identify the school as a dynamic positive force for improvement and to link it as closely as possible with every forward-looking element in the

area. This calls for a type of showmanship, comprehensive grasp of PR possibilities, and plain hard work which is difficult to muster.

The school program gets ample attention in the Cleveland metropolitan press because of continuing close attention to press relations and taking advantage of newsmaking situations. This effort, however, is supplemented by a variety of printed media used by Jenkins. The PTA publishes a 10-page mimeographed newsletter five times yearly. A hefty amount of school news also goes into the monthly newsletter of the Moreland Community Association. Parents receive five times each year a publication which consists of samples of creative writing by students. An annual "best writing of the year" publication is produced by offset. Jenkins also publishes *The Principal's Newsletter* during the year. It goes to parents and area leaders.

What counts most in the PR program, however, are the things which Moreland School does to dramatize its program. The school has gone in heavily for team teaching, with every teacher having a team assignment. This has led to the origination of "Education Parties" in homes, at which a teaching team appears to discuss any phase of the school's program. Sets of color slides, some with taped narration, have been developed for use by the teams and at community meetings.

A group of 25 mothers has been organized as "Team Mother Specialists" to work in teams with the teacher teams, serving as volunteer aides. "They are tremendous PR agents," said Jenkins. "They carry out into the community much more school news than we could possibly send out."

At the year's end, the Team Mothers, plus all others who have specifically served the school, are invited to an honor tea held by the staff. Corsages go to the ladies; flowers are placed in the lapels of the men. There is a kind of turnabout at midyear. Jenkins suggested that a group of fathers might like to rise early and cook breakfast for the staff. This makes quite a hit with both dads and teachers.

Four teachers were encouraged to seek a local foundation grant in order to write, produce, and stage an original children's operetta, *New Land, New Life,* featuring upper elementary students as cast members. A $2,880 grant was approved and the operetta was formally sponsored by the board of education and the foundation.

Imaginative efforts go into plans for open house programs. On one occasion, for example, open house was a two-night affair. On the first night, parents and students of the first three grades were invited to see a group of 90 pupil folk dancers put on a 30-minute performance. This was followed by a showing of *The Moreland Story,* a 27-minute, 8mm motion picture produced to show the school's team teaching program, flexible grouping, and creative learning techniques. The second night, for upper elementary students and their parents, featured music groups from the school, others from an all-white school, and the film.

A PR BOOM FOR STATE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION?

What often has been termed the weakest link in the school public relations chain is scheduled to undergo a tremendous beefing up during the months ahead in some states. For the first time, state superintendents of schools have money, justification, and solid support for the establishment of more effective internal and external information programs. Title V of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act provides comparatively large sums of federal funds for strengthening state departments of education. A substantial chunk of the money can go into improved communications, if the chief executives want it that way. Some of the administrators, sensitive to leadership requirements, have already begun the buildup with state resources.

When the Council of Chief State School Officers met in Honolulu, many of the problems which were raised also pointed up some kind of

communication difficulty. U.S. Education Commissioner Francis Keppel complimented the superintendents for giving high priority to improved leadership services "and especially for better collection and dissemination of information on the state of education in your individual states." He added: "We must now recognize across the nation what you have clearly recognized in your own states: that we are woefully short of the basic information we need to carry forward our educational purposes, to set sound goals, and work together to reach them."

James E. Allen Jr., New York commissioner of education, said PR should be considered along with planning, setting of standards, etc., as a major function of a dynamic department of education. "Education is running into very bumpy weather in explaining what we are trying to do," he said. Declared Colorado Commissioner Byron W. Hansford: "We have the kind of situation where we must develop schools of the type which the public has never seen before."

Many, probably most, state departments will be developing their information programs almost from scratch because they today have one-man or part-time operations. There are some rather sophisticated concepts on the drawing boards. In Wisconsin, for example, Superintendent Angus B. Rothwell plans to weld together into one comprehensive unit the functions of information retrieval, publications, internal and external communications, and PR consultant services to school districts. A similar plan is being worked out in Washington State by Superintendent Louis Bruno and his aides. Florida Superintendent Floyd T. Christian said he hoped that school districts could be given PR consultant services.

The PR operation in the Oregon Department of Education was seen by Superintendent Leon P. Minear as "the major communication center of education, linking school to school, school to state, state to state, and state to nation." The facilities in Oregon are to include a unit for sampling and analyzing public and professional opinions and attitudes, a publications and news media center which will serve also as a laboratory for school people, a laboratory and demonstration center for internal and school-community group interaction, and a formal liaison-coordinating unit working with information agencies. In addition to a greatly strengthened internal communications operation, he said, there will be an inservice program to continuously upgrade the communication skills of professional staff members in the department.

Sarah Folsom, superintendent of Arizona schools, told the state superintendents she was convinced that "communications is one of the most important functions of a small state department of education—particularly in those states where a relatively small population is spread across large land areas." Her most significant actions to date, she said, have been in the improvement of communications via mass media, publications, regional and state con-

ferences. Commissioner J. H. Warf, Tennessee, said school PR functions too long had been left to voluntary professional associations. A state information program was needed in the realization that PR by professional groups is not necessarily a complete effort.

ON STAGE: PROJECT PUBLIC INFORMATION

A vast new project, which potentially may add more muscle to school public relations than any other development in more than a decade, has been approved by the U.S. Office of Education. Headed up by Wisconsin, seven state departments of education have developed a three-year, $1.7 million "Project Public Information," designed to help all state departments of education make a major breakthrough in the PR area. Authorization of funds for the initial year was given by the U.S. Office, with the money to come from a special provision for cooperative projects to strengthen state departments of education under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

The big idea is to develop nationwide research and demonstration programs and to make available, as consultants, the country's best media and PR experts so that any state department of education desiring to do so can develop an effective PR program. Wisconsin State Superintendent Rothwell, a key figure in the organization and development of the project, sees the state department of education information function as being of greater importance than at any previous time.

The project will be guided by a board of directors composed of Rothwell and the state superintendents of six other coparticipating states (Colorado, Florida, Hawaii, New York, Washington, and West Virginia). Administration will be handled by a national project staff plus regional staff offices to be established by the coparticipating states.

National seminars, beamed at PR program planning, organization, and coordinating functions, are scheduled to be held for top administrators of all 50 state departments. Regional seminars will be focused upon technical aspects of program operations. The research and experimental programs will be aimed at special problems, testing new multimedia information techniques, etc. Scope of the project is broad. It aims not only to enable a department of information to set up and carry out a good information program but also to acquire skills in getting audience feedback, equip department staff members with PR skills, and provide PR consulting services to school districts.

Adapted from an address by Martin Essex, superintendent of schools, Akron, Ohio, at the School PR Exhibition and Counseling Center, during the 1966 annual convention of the American Association of School Administrators in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

STRATEGY IN SCHOOL FINANCE CAMPAIGN PLANNING

It takes a team of 10,000 to launch and recover a capsule from Cape Kennedy. A school finance campaign can involve manpower and resources in similarly grand proportions. Like a space shot, a levy or bond drive also demands tremendous preparation leading up to the lift-off.

Viewing a recent campaign in retrospect, I identified five critical stages in producing a successful orbit. Let me attempt a recap.

The R&D Stage

One doesn't decide overnight to go to the moon. Such a trip requires careful projections and the development of hardware. A journey to the ballot box requires a similar degree of research and development.

Research — A careful projection of the financial need is an essential. Such studies require competence and diligence. The accuracy of the projections is of paramount importance to maintain the veracity of the board and the administration. Thus, an early start for the study is helpful.

After an accurate accumulation of research facts is compiled, take steps to express these complex facts in concise and clear terms. Simplify the mass figures of enrollment and the complicated organizational and financial statistics available in your district. Reduce this information to charts or overhead projection trans-

parencies to help determine which materials will be most meaningful to you and, eventually, to the public.

For purposes of negotiation, it appears to be desirable to set the initial concept of the millage on the high side. It is easier to come down than to go up. One should sweep as quickly as possible over the tax increase itself and bring emphasis to the need. This is particularly true when asking for a rate that would be the highest in the state for the larger cities. *The fundamental factor is the quality of schools and the adequacy of services.* Although one cannot hope to consider the needs out of the context of cost, it is a matter of placing first things first, of construing education to be the most significant force undergirding American society.

Classified Consultation—A prime aspect of this precampaign planning may be characterized as the classified consultation or "gumshoe" part. An administrator who ignores the power forces and opinion leaders of a community is as foolhardy as the astronaut who would ignore the meteorological reports at blast-off time. It is amazing how cooperative the decision makers will be if they are consulted in advance. Experience indicates that the value of post-decision consultation with the key forces of a community is of lesser value, for then you are asking them to rubber-stamp a decision.

Civic leaders, labor spokesmen, tax consultants for big industries, political forces, newspaper publishers, and radio and TV management respond more willingly when involved in making the actual decision. For this reason, it is desirable to start with board and staff at a relatively high millage or proposed-cost figure.

During the consultation stage, it may be necessary to adjust your procedure to existing conditions. Other issues may be on the ballot at the same time. It is important to keep in mind that a small amount of overt opposition can be fatal to a money issue. One board member who is jumping for the printer's ink can be the lethal blow. Dissident forces within the employee organizations can obtain both printed and air wave space that is disastrous. The odds for a successful orbit are certainly reduced when less than the full thrust of unity is released.

Citizens Seminars—Equally valid in the countdown stage is a testing of citizen sentiment. One can easily become despondent at the apparent lack of understanding about the real problems of schools. An effort to discuss them meaningfully is salutary, even if seemingly limited in impact.

The Citizens School Seminars organized in Akron in May last year were directed toward consultation with representatives of labor, business, industry, religion, and civic affairs who normally were not associated with schools. Personal invitations, by letter and telephone, solicited their participation—at a time convenient to them—in one of the series of 18 seminars conducted throughout the city. Two seminars were held in each of nine high school districts. A 24-page research docu-

ment and discussion guide prepared for these sessions covered the major aspects of school operation, including pupils, curriculum and instruction, teachers, buildings, and adequacy of resources. Ample time was provided for an introductory filmstrip and at least two hours of discussion under lay leadership.

A citizens committee summarized the findings and suggestions, giving substance to the public's concern for more vocational education, classes for the handicapped, inner-city services, library expansion, and experimentation with new media. The results were reported as part of a 20-page special back-to-school section of the *Akron Beacon Journal* (paid for, incidentally, by advertisers, not the board of education).

The Countdown Stage

With the research, information, and opinion in hand, the time for decision approaches. Instead of presenting a lengthy enumeration of the many campaign preparations, here is a short countdown, Cape Kennedy style.

10. *A Unanimous Board* — A single negative vote or public assertion of opposition by any board member can be comforting to the enemy. It is the spark that may ignite organized opposition. Thus, unity of decision is essential when the board acts on the issue to be submitted.

9. *News Climate* — Public relations is a year-round concern, but prior to the presentation of an issue it is helpful to develop a news climate which recognizes the need. Teacher procurement problems, needed services, class size, inadequacy of textbooks and supplies and the like should be kept in the news for months before the campaign is mentioned. But it is very important to avoid criticism of the quality of the schools. This is a neat trick if you can do it—showing need, but preserving respect for the present service. People vote for success, not for failure. Pictures of the deplorable conditions of classes meeting in corridors, of shops set up in barns or garages, do not generate support. The fact that these exist, if presented properly, can be helpful. But people vote on confidence.

8. *Financing* — Financing the campaign should be a quiet operation. Tax moneys, in Ohio, cannot be used for such purposes. I believe it is important that procedures be established whereby certain organizations, particuarly the PTA, will budget each year for the campaigns. We know in Ohio that periodic campaigns are inevitable. Thus, an awareness of the reasons for campaigns should be kept before some major organizations. In our city we spend approximately $17,000 in a typical campaign. One should know what funds are available before the intensive work begins.

7. *Organization*—It is important to develop a chart of the organization of campaign personnel. Functions and assignments should be outlined on paper for all to understand.

6. *Administrative Conference*— The structure begins to become functional with a conference of the administrative staff, late in the summer

but before school begins. In Akron, this involves approximately 100 persons.

5. *Lay Leadership*—The heart of Akron's campaign structure is the opinion leaders. They are selected and prepared ahead of time, in workshops, for their responsibilities.

First, a citizens committee is assembled. For this assignment, seek respected leaders, not "has-beens." The second step provides for workshops, quietly organized, for 200 resource persons. Another such workshop is held for 200 discussion leaders. These persons, selected by the principals of the various schools, are chosen because they are respected and because of their abilities. A clearly written, comprehensive background document of 10 to 12 pages is prepared for them, to answer all essential questions. This document serves as a resource piece for these leaders.

4. *Town Hall Meetings*—Next, during the last week in September, regional Town Hall Meetings are held in each of nine high school districts. Approximately 250 opinion leaders are sent from the elementary, junior, and senior high schools in each district. The program includes a factual speaker, followed by small discussion groups, and concluding with an inspirational lay speaker. After all nine meetings have been held, more than 2,000 lay opinion leaders have been informed and have offered suggestions for the campaign. No publicity is given these invitational gatherings.

3. *Staff Workshops*—Shortly after school begins, workshops are held for all 2,300 members of the teaching staff, with separate sessions for nonteaching employees. These are held under the auspices of the classroom teachers organization and last fall carried the themes, "The Situation," "Gird for Action," and "Let's Do It!" Both lay and staff workshops are earnest sessions, concerned with suggestions for campaign strategy. In this way we are not asking for support, but are asking for advice about how to acquaint fellow citizens with the importance of the issue. There is a vast difference between inviting someone to help you and, in contrast, asking them if they approve what you are doing.

This stage is really part of the "gumshoe" campaign. It makes certain, when the blast-off thrust takes place, that the opinion leaders are ready to reassure their fellow citizens that the proposal is a sound and responsible one.

2. *Registration Drive*—To stimulate parental registration for voting, the PTA sends home a letter stressing the values of citizenship participation, listing the various registration places and times, and offering transportation if needed.

1. *Liftoff!*—The moment for the campaign to start has arrived.

The Blast-off Stage

Now we are ready to conduct the public campaign, but the hardest part is behind us. For veteran campaigners, it is not necessary to list all of the media and approaches. These would include printed materials, filmstrips, speakers bureaus,

advertisements in newspapers, radio and television time, letters to the clergy and other community groups, cartoons, handbooks, and posters.

Like a rocket, a campaign has several built-in, self-destructive devices. To guard against an abortion, therefore, perhaps we should mention at least three ways to scratch a flight.

One is to make the "poor teacher" pitch. I believe it unwise to stress the "poor, unfortunate employees." A realistic look at the nature of society and of human beings causes one to recognize that teachers may be misinformed if they believe that the heart of the entire community is bleeding for them. The public is concerned about *services to children.* We, as teachers, can understand this fact if we will merely stop to analyze our feelings at the time of a bus strike, a strike in the rubber industry, or a strike by the telephone operators. I fear the teacher's heart is not bleeding for these individuals, but is concerned whether the buses will be running, whether the phones will be operating, or whether tires will be available for his car. Thus, the "poor teacher" pitch appears to be one that has little value and should be relegated to a lesser priority in the presentations.

Another is to overpromise. Any ambiguity about promised salary increases, construction of additional facilities, or providing an additional service can be twisted in a manner that will, a year hence, imply very explicitly that the administration has been lacking in integrity. Consequently, I urge a policy of outlining the proposal in broad terms that relate to children, stating that the board of education will make the judgments in accordance with the best interests of the schools and the conditions that exist. To be realistic, one cannot control what a board of education will do, and the board may have good reason to review its action at any time.

Another abortion is to stress dollars. The size of the levy should not be accentuated. Rather, the emphasis should be on need. To talk millage may cause a firming-up of negative reactions, with unfavorable letters to the editor, or the organization of a formal opposition movement.

The Orbit Stage

By late October, the campaign intensifies. To benefit from American Education Week as a vehicle for wide citizen involvement, it is rescheduled locally to precede the balloting.

School open houses will bring 59,000 adults to school, a tremendous opportunity to inform a "captive audience." Arrangements are made for a filmstrip with sound, narrated by the citizens committee chairman, to be viewed in assemblies in each building, undergirded by sound and interesting demonstrations of what is being taught and how.

Classrooms-in-the-window, meanwhile, give downtown shoppers an hour-by-hour view of the teaching and learning process in 30 to 40 different subjects at all grade levels.

Building dedications are timed so that the public pride in progress can

be expressed and tours conducted to give news value to the campaign.

Gimmicks of varied sorts are solicited and tried—lawn signs made from coat hangers, a poster lofted by a traffic helicopter, car radio antenna pennants, bumper stickers, Coca-Cola truck posters, milk bottle collars—along with special editions of each high school newspaper distributed to each household.

The house-to-house visitation conducted by elementary PTA units brings a leaflet of information to the home of every registered voter. The Board of Elections makes the official precinct lists available to us by October 22 and groups of teachers check the list for the likely head of the household. In this way, this emissary to the home has a reason to call, because he has the name of the person and he has the effectiveness that comes through the use of the name. In addition, a small card is employed which asks the emissary to indicate an evaluation of the response of the potential voter. In addition, the emissaries do not waste time with nonregistered voters.

We urge that home visits should never be made by a single individual but by a pair of parents. Each supplies the other with elbow courage. Every home visitor wears a ribbon which proclaims, "I am for schools." Not only is the ribbon an identification, but it creates immediate rapport. It adds the personal touch, which is essential.

One effective device is a cartoon caricature of a happy youngster or

Summary of Major Finance Campaigns for the Akron Public Schools

Year	Millage	Purpose	Term	Percentage favorable
1955	12.0 (Renewal & Increase)	Operating	5 Years	62.9
	2.0 (Increase)	Building	5 Years	65.6
1957	2.0 (Increase)	Operating	3 Years	56.2
1960	14.0 (Renewal & Increase)	Operating	5 Years	76.9
	2.0 (Renewal & Increase)	Building	5 Years	75.5
1962	4.8 (Increase)	Operating	3 Years	59.9
1965	18.8 (Renewal & Increase)	Operating	5 Years	65.5
	2.0 (Renewal & Increase)	Building	5 Years	64.2

Since 1955 Superintendent Martin Essex has directed five major finance campaigns for the Akron Public Schools, all of them in November general elections. *The result:* Highest school tax rate of any of the eight Ohio large cities. Akron is a city of 300,000 population.

two, with a printed reminder to vote. Since it does not say vote "for," but merely reminds a person to vote, it does not violate the ethics of materials that are sent home with children. The day after election, a thank-you cartoon, again with happy children and a school in the background, should be sent to every home. It creates a feeling of pride and achievement.

A board of education letter is personally addressed to each voter about six days preceding the election. First-class postage is affixed by hand, on the assumption that it attracts more attention than a metered letter.

For the telephone follow-up on election day, duplicate voter registration cards are made by high school student typists and the phoning is organized by junior high PTA's, always with the offer to provide transportation if needed.

The Recovery Stage

Bringing a campaign back from orbit starts with an organized plan to sample returns on election night. Custodians in key schools keep in touch with precinct workers to give an early indication of voting trends.

When the votes are counted you hope you have obtained the necessary margin. But win, lose, or draw, a big job confronts the director of a campaign immediately after a successful election. He must set the machinery into motion to keep faith with the intended purposes of the levy.

Concurrently with this action, a tremendous task confronts those in positions of responsibility to express gratitude for the volunteer efforts in the campaign. Some of these expressions can be made in "blanket" form, but many require personal letters or other appropriate means of acknowledging appreciation.

It is then time to begin thinking about the next campaign.

I have an abundance of faith in the human, or personal, approach, in the workshop method of preparing opinion leaders, and in developing a sensitive campaign organization. I would be hesitant to hazard a statement and declare which of these many approaches to the electorate may be the most effective. I suspect that they are all necessary, but we should never be so naive as to think that we reach the total electorate by these many devices. I suspect a very small percentage of the electorate in a city of 300,000 people is aware, before they go to the polls, that a school money issue is on the ballot.

Reactions of the electorate are determined from day to day over the long period of 365 days each year. Every act of a teacher and a school employee may contribute favorably or unfavorably to these reactions. The state of the economy may be an imponderable that cannot be overcome. The campaign is important, but one must be realistic about the total forces at work.

The only formula for success, then, is the one that rules the launching pad: To win a school election, make sure all systems are go—then hope for the best!

THE PUBLIC IS PLURAL

If you catch yourself thinking and talking about "the public" as though it were some kind of massive single-minded thing, the cure is a peek at an attitude survey which has identified the sub-publics. Such a state-wide opinion survey was completed by the Ohio Council for Education, Columbus, Ohio, before it sought voter approval of a vastly improved state school finance program to be financed by an increased sales tax. Survey findings, according to James O. Brennan, administrative director, were used to develop campaign themes and strategies.

In many instances, the conclusions of many little publics will not deviate greatly from that of the big collective total public. In some situations, however, there will be sharp differences. Some are understandable; some are baffling. The Ohio poll offered examples of both types.

Although the Ohio school proposal had been controversial and a

topic covered frequently in news media for at least 18 months, three out of four persons interviewed in the poll said they knew little or nothing about it. Poorest informed were those in the 21-34-year age groups, those in the big cities, and those with children enrolled in private or parochial schools. Best informed were those in the 45-49-year age group, those who had attended college, and those with children in college. Negroes were better informed than white persons about the issue. Residents of medium-sized cities fared better than rural and metropolitan residents.

Younger age groups, despite their lack of information about the issue, indicated a much greater willingness to support it than older persons. Better educated persons displayed strongest support. Residents of medium-sized cities, despite being better informed about the proposal, were less in favor of it than those living in rural areas and big cities. Catholic and Jewish persons polled favored the program less than Protestants. Renters were more favorably inclined than homeowners. There was very little difference in opinion among groups based upon political affiliation, union membership, or race.

Rural and small community residents were much more convinced than others that good schools are a major attraction for new business and industry. Although two thirds of all those interviewed expressed this belief, slightly more than one half of those polled in Cleveland and Cincinnati felt this way. One half of the Negroes polled felt that good schools were among the most important factors. Few differences of opinion on this issue were evident among other sub-publics identified in the poll.

Two thirds of the state-wide group felt that better schools could solve the problem of jobs lost because of automation, but some sub-groups were not so sure. These included the high school dropouts, those over 60 years of age, and those with less than an eighth-grade education. Cleveland residents, persons with college training, and those having children in college were most convinced that improved schools could help lick the automation problem.

Very few of those polled felt that the new federal school program would reduce the need for state financial funds. However, one third of all those polled did not know what the effect of the federal legislation would be. Some groups had large "no opinion" members. These included the group 60 years of age or older, those with less than a high school education, and persons who had no children.

Seven voters in 10 thought that property taxes constituted a serious problem. This caused more concern in union families than in non-union families and more among high school dropouts and those with only an elementary education. There was virtual unanimity about needed school improvements among groups: more vocational training, better guidance and counseling, improved quality of teachers.

SCHOOL PR AND THE SOCIAL SCIENTISTS

The frequently-heard proposal that school public relations people quit fumbling around and get social science research help to solve communications problems was tested out recently at Temple University, Philadelphia. The confrontation was a three-day communications research seminar, directed by Leslie Kindred, professor of education at Temple, and supported by a $28,652 federal grant. Among the 40 participants were 10 school PR executives and superintendents. The rest were university personnel and communication specialists representing psychology, political science, education, sociology, journalism, and radio-TV.

There were surprises. PR people, generally, were dismayed over the skimpy clues yielded by much of the communications research effort to date. Many of the findings reported were fenced in with cautions not to generalize and warnings that they were limited experiments. The communications interests of many of the researchers were in aspects not akin to PR. With some exceptions, there was only mild interest among the social scientists in the PR problems of the public schools. There were proposals for a "marriage" of communications research and school PR forces, establishment of research projects and centers. There were also vigorous dissents. One participant said he would resent such an intrusion in his research work. Another said pursuit of common sense rather than grand new research projects was most appropriate.

Some of the schoolmen opened eyes with their candid accounts of the types of problems faced by school systems today. Assistant Superintendent Norman Drachler, Detroit, dramatically flashed a series of transparencies on the screen to re-

port a school election voting analysis which disclosed knotty problems. "Tell us what we did wrong, gentlemen," he asked. "We, as educators, don't know how to lick the problem. Maybe you scientists can help us."

Gene Lines, 1964-1965 president of the National School Public Relations Association, frankly expressed doubt that school PR people could act on the basis of experimental findings. He had support from R. J. Pellegrin, University of Oregon, who said experiments under laboratory conditions were not necessarily solutions to problems. "We have a great tendency to overgeneralize, and behavioral science is not an easy source of information," he said.

Harry J. Skornia, University of Illinois radio-TV professor, offered some observations about the quality of communications research along with developments in his field. "Many of the so-called research reports are products of workers with no research training or standards," he said. "They do not stand up under any valid research criteria." A report of "no significant difference" in an experiment should not be ignored, he said. "Actually, this phrase conceals more than it reveals," he added.

The papers presented, nevertheless, offered theories and experimental findings which made for interesting speculation and conjecture.

Don't always expect a person to react as a member of his social group, said Harold Mendelsohn, University of Denver sociologist. He may be reacting as the member of a group he would like to belong to. He called this "reference group theory." This can explain seemingly inconsistent behavior under varying social situations or even behavior which seems to be inconsistent with self-interest.

Sociologists, Mendelsohn said, have been concerned with what individuals do with mass communications rather than what mass communication does to individuals. He also became the conference pace-setter in declaring that mass communication is greatly overrated as a changer of attitudes. There are so many variables which get in a communicator's way, he said, that most messages serve to crystallize latent dispositions or reinforce existing convictions.

The growth of mass media, declared Ithiel de Sola Pool, Massachusetts Institute of Technology political scientist, has resulted in greatly exaggerated beliefs in the power of propaganda. "The fallacy in the belief in all-powerful propaganda is brought home forcibly whenever we ourselves are committed to the side of the propagandist and wish he could succeed better," Pool said. Mass media offer important effects, even though they may have limited persuasive powers. In an election campaign, mass media mobilize voter interest and partisanship. They also have important effects upon attention, information, audience interest, and actions taken, he said.

The greatest political impact of propaganda, he said, is the using of mass media not only "to get a message out but coupling the effort with organization to get the message acted

upon. People seldom act on information received directly from mass media alone." Theodore L. Reller, dean of the University of California School of Education, said educators should pay much more attention to coordinating the use of mass media efforts and organization action. School people, he said, must also become more sensitive to the identification of issues so that they need not be in the dark until the decision-makers have done their work.

Daniel Katz, University of Michigan psychologist, reviewed a series of experiments which offered clues for communicators. Experimenters have found that people tend to remember message content but forget the source. This sometimes causes persons to be at first skeptical about information secured from unreliable sources but later they forget the source and repeat the rumor. If the source of communication is to retain its effect, said Katz, the message must be reiterated over a period of time.

The main effort in national political campaigns is to maximize support from those already partially committed, rather than convert the opposition, said Katz in underlining Pool's thesis. "Commitment does not mean a profound decision on the part of the individual," he said. "All it implies is a willingness on his part to enter a situation, take some action or assume a role. So long as he perceives that he has acted voluntarily, the requirement is met." If some degree of commitment or compliance can be obtained, the greater are the possibilities of moving toward greater change, he said.

Fear-arousing and negative appeals can have a boomerang effect, said Katz. They must have immediate relevance for the individual's own problems, and a clear, appropriate channel must be available for the individual to take action, he said. If the message is too intense, it may arouse the person's ego defenses and some conflicted individuals easily will become defensive, Katz declared.

When people have a thorough understanding of an issue, Katz said, they do not easily fall victim to irrational arguments. If they know both sides of an argument, they can deal more capably with counter-propaganda.

Although one political scientist suggested that school PR people should be "civil servants" and not propagandize a viewpoint, Carroll B. Hanson, Seattle, Washington, schools information director, said a sword of Damocles hangs over many school districts in the form of hazardous special tax elections. All phases of the Seattle PR program, he said, add up to an immediate objective of passing the annual levy. "What we want to avoid," he said, "is the big gamble."

Lee Demeter, Great Neck, New York, information director and an NSPRA past president, said he thought school PR was both an art and a science. "The 'science' is the easy part of it," Demeter told the group. "It's the 'art' part of the definition which separates the men from the boys."

DEVELOPING A NEWS REPORTING NETWORK

One of the toughest nuts to crack in the development of countless school system public relations programs is the creation of an effective news reporting organization. Many of them exist only on paper. Others stagger along in exasperating inefficiency with most of the action being supplied by a few publicity hogs. In many cases of failure, the blame rests with the superintendent, or PR director, or both.

If the chief administrator fails to see a good news network as a PR program essential and withholds his solid support and interest, it is quite likely that efforts to set up and operate the network will meet lethargy and even antagonism at the building level. The PR man can easily set the scene for failure if he underestimates the size of the job, if he fails to recognize that he has acquired a continuing responsibility for cultivation and fence-mending, or if he lacks skills in working with principals and teachers in building the news organization.

Manpower for most news networks is supplied by principals (and their secretaries). Teacher news representatives, often selected by the principal, constitute another basic type of organization. The news-gathering job also may be a dual principal-teacher operation.

Rarest of all is the effective student news-gathering organization.

Usually this kind of venture depends upon one or more dynamic, hard-working journalism teachers. One of the biggest student news bureau operations is conducted at Tamalpais Union High School District, Larkspur, California, where three high schools operate bureaus. Edward J. Neumeier, public information coordinator, started the first one six years ago. Most news items and photos produced by the student journalists for area news outlets deal with student activities. But this can constitute quite a volume. One of the bureaus in a single week produced 68 news stories and five picture features. Topnotch reporters sometimes are asked by newspapers to cover community speakers, review plays, and cover sports events.

At Arlington County, Virginia, the news-gathering organization is made up of a faculty member news representative at each building on a continuing assignment, plus journalism students. The setup is new, according to Richard B. Holcomb, community relations coordinator, Arlington County Schools. At a school news workshop last fall, attended by the adult reporters and the youngsters, each participant received a copy of a news reporting guidebook. A similar workshop was held last summer for PTA publicity chairmen throughout the county.

A similar guidebook has been prepared for principals and PTA news representatives of the Fairfax County Schools, Fairfax, Virginia. Five seminars were held in one month in sections of the district to discuss PR and news reporting problems.

To help make all 450 professional staff members of the Oshkosh, Wisconsin, schools more news conscious, they were presented at an inservice meeting with a news-publicity guide printed on a bright orange file folder. Helpful hints, details on news contacts, and publicity policies are included. At Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, building news reporters are supplied with monthly reporting forms, stamped envelopes, and a bulletin of suggestions about reporting for the system staff publication, *Communication Lines*.

PR director Mary Ericsson, Pittsburg, California, schools, sends a "request for information" form to teachers or administrators when she hears about an upcoming story possibility. PTA news representatives at District 65, Evanston, Illinois, produce building news for a system newsletter.

SEVEN REVEALING SYNDROMES

Put a stethoscope to a teacher association's communications and public relations operations and you'll find it to be as revealing as an X-ray about the overall effectiveness of the organization. The close ties between successful performance and leadership attitudes about PR were pointed up in revealing fashion by Beatrice M. Gudridge, associate director of the National Education Association's Press-Radio-TV Division, in an address before a workshop of the Indiana Classroom Teachers Association.

She listed "seven deadly syndromes" of local associations which are seriously handicapping the associations and school PR:

- **A notion that PR techniques will disguise an association's failure to develop a program of action.**

Some association leaders, said Mrs. Gudridge, hunt eternally for magic Madison Avenue techniques they think they must be lacking, while ignoring the basic essential—a dynamic program of action. This vulnerability makes the association a sitting duck in a showdown with a union; teachers believe they will be choosing between a long record of inaction and the promise of action.

- **The repeated refrain of what teachers want from the community, rather than what they can give.**

Teachers, forever talking cost instead of services and what they want rather than what they can give, she said, are "putting all the begs in one askit." She added: "No wonder the press thinks that teachers spell PR with a dollar sign."

- **Ineptitude in publications.**

Quality standards of editing and writing must be met. "If the asso-

ciation newsletter looks fuddy-duddy and incompetent, people are going to get the idea that the association is fuddy-duddy and incompetent, too," Mrs. Gudridge said.

- **Fear and timidity in dealing with the press.**

The story of education is not going to get to the public without the newsman, she said. "You need him more than he needs you. Get acquainted with the reporter and get to know *his* needs and problems." For tips, read *The Schools and the Press,* published by the National School Public Relations Association.

- **Teacher failure to help communicate classroom news to the community.**

Too many teachers and their associations pass the buck of classroom and instructional PR to the central administration when they should be offering their services in helping to channel the story to the public, she said.

- **A parochial attitude ignores the fast-rising level of information the public has about education matters.**

Parents and patrons, thanks to newspapers, TV, magazines, are learning more about education happenings than ever before. They'll be asking questions and you'd better be well informed. "You should be prepared to answer before they ask," she said.

- **An attitude of belligerent hostility.**

Too many associations are blaming their problems on the administration, press, board, business community. "Stop looking for villains in the woodwork," she said. "Be tireless and tactful in your search for friends. In the long run, the friends you make will be your key to a successful PR program."

LET THE BORROWER BEWARE

Before you pirate a design or typographic idea from a snazzy business annual report or other publication, don't make the assumption that because it has been professionally designed it represents effective communication. Pilfering could be a terrible mistake. This year's crop of industry annual reports includes a shocking number of examples in which readability has been virtually destroyed. Despite the four-color photos, expensive papers, and top-notch printing, reports of some leading corporations are prime examples of violations of readability standards.

What has happened is that decisions about typographic selection and display have been turned over, in some instances, to designers and graphics people who are strong on illustrations, color, and visual appearance but who know very little about readability of the text.

Reports in which body type was set in sans-serif or other offbeat faces were extremely common, even though readability studies consistently show that this reduces readership. A good sprinkling of reports had type lines set with a ragged right margin or set in very wide measure. The president's message in one report was set entirely in italics and with ragged right margins. It was six pages in length. To make matters worse, the type on some pages was printed over a dark solid color. In other reports, improper use of color and type ruined the legibility of copy pages and graphs.

There is likely more to come. A design firm which sponsored a workshop on business annual reports climaxed the project by publishing a report on the affair which amounted (unintentionally) to a collection of typographic and design techniques to discourage readership. In another publication distributed by a paper company to editors and publications people, a protesting author deplored the way designers have taken over. He suggested that if other methods fail to "enlist erring designers on the side of legibility," legibility be made a standard for judging in competitions. "I believe the incidence of typography which is seen but not read would decrease sharply and soon," he said. The publication obliged by setting his article in a small sans-serif italics typeface with no indentation for paragraphs. It was then printed on a glaring, high gloss paper stock.

WHO'S RESPONSIBLE FOR INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS?

All-important to effective internal communication are understanding and commitment by top and subordinate levels of management, according to President Lynn A. Townsend, of Chrysler Corporation. He told the International Council of Industrial Editors that "it is the top man who first must establish the right communication climate," must initiate and take an active part in the total communication program, and make clear to all that it is an essential investment not to be whacked when budgets are tight.

The top man, however, must have full cooperation from others in the administrative group, according to Townsend. In fact, Chrysler's written communication policy demands it, makes it clear that "individual managers do not have the luxury of deciding whether communication is desirable" in carrying out the two-way information flow. "A manager must not view corporate information as his personal province—as something to parcel out to a favored few," he said. "Managers at various levels must not create separate islands of communication autonomy and programing; they must cooperate with the total corporate communication effort and help build higher levels of corporate-wide loyalty and understanding."

Planning and long-term invest-

ment are essential for good communications, Townsend said. "I am astonished at how often managers assume that communication can be effective on a haphazard basis," he observed. "Managers agree that quality, or finance, or engineering are functions which require planning and measurement. Why, then, should communication be left to chance — unplanned, unorganized, uncontrolled, unmeasured?"

Chrysler, like many other companies, until a few years ago followed a primitive concept of communications, said Townsend. A couple of editors were hired, placed away in a corner of the organization, told to get out a magazine on time, print nothing controversial, and make no one mad. The existing organization structure was relied upon to carry the communication load. It doesn't work, he said. Every major management decision calls for a complete communication plan.

Skilled communications people are needed, too, he said. Managers, who wouldn't think of entrusting an expensive machine or engineering process to an unskilled person, too often assign an untrained individual to internal communications work. "As I see it, the job of establishing adequate communication programing begins only when professional communication talent is put in place," the Chrysler president said.

Lynn A. Townsend's requirements for effective internal communications:

1. Internal communication must be recognized as an essential tool of good management.
2. Employees must be well-informed concerning their mutual interest in company success.
3. Individual managers must actively support the corporate communication effort.
4. Substantially greater emphasis must be put on communication planning and measurement.
5. Top management must establish a good communication climate.
6. A long-term investment in professional talent and communication programing must be made.
7. Management must recognize its responsibility to listen as well as speak.
8. Managers must recognize the desire of employees to help their company, and the power of communication to tap this great potential.

THE LEADER

The close proximity of leadership qualities and PR skills was recognized time and again at the 1965 convention of the American Association of School Administrators. A report by the Educational Policies Commission, *The Unique Role of the Superintendent of Schools*, released during the AASA meeting, declared that educational leadership henceforth should be viewed as implying community leadership. What the superintendent does affects community thinking about education. His influences on the quality of education significantly affect individual lives and the community's future, declared the report. EPC described the superintendent in the central role of leadership as playing the multiple role of "teacher, politician, philosopher, student of life, public relations counselor, and businessman."

Key figure in the determination of the PR program itself is the superintendent, said Clayton E. Rose, past president of the National School Public Relations Association and New York State Teachers Association PR director, at a session on the

essential ingredients of an effective PR program.

"Without question, the one person who has major responsibility for the PR program is the schools' chief administrative officer—the superintendent of schools," Rose said. "It is his responsibility to guide, counsel, and recommend as the board of education moves toward the adoption of its policy on the schools' PR. It is his responsibility to implement policy with a planned program. It is his responsibility to provide the leadership to set the program in motion.

"It is his responsibility to recognize and utilize the talents of all members of the professional staff in carrying out the PR function. It is equally important that he delegate authority with responsibility and that he give credit where due for achievements and accomplishments."

Special emphasis was given to the importance of the superintendent's internal communications and relationships, not only for the sake of better morale and a smoother running operation but also because of the impact of the staff on PR. "Much of our public information program is aimed directly at our staff members, for we recognize that without the understanding of our teachers, principals, secretaries, and custodians we cannot hope for understanding by the lay public," said Superintendent Charles R. Spain, Albuquerque, New Mexico, in one of the taped presentations by outstanding superintendents at the School PR Exhibition and Counseling Center.

Superintendent Robert E. Jenkins, Pasadena, California, in another continuing tape presentation, declared that "the first and foremost reason for educational leadership is to help our teachers and our citizens to work together on behalf of the strongest educational program for our public schools." A major leadership responsibility, he said, is to make staff members feel comfortable in bringing about sound changes and introducing innovations in the educational program. Shared planning with the teaching staff is a key factor in achieving this, he said.

Also underlining the significance of good internal information was Superintendent Sidney P. Marland Jr., Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, who said in his taped message: "It is important not to limit the superintendent's communication just to the public and to the patrons. The faculty is also a very, very real part of the communications that I would list under school public information."

To be seen and to be heard is one of the chief executive's main responsibilities, said Marland. This is not a matter of personal aggrandizement, he added. "I think that in America we tend to personalize our feeling about institutions. I don't know whether this is right or wrong, but I think this is the way we behave." This means that the superintendent, in confronting very unpleasant issues, may find himself to be a symbol of antagonism, Marland pointed out. But this is part of the job as chief executive officer, he said.

THE PR OF RECOGNITION

Despite the abuses by phonies, the public relations technique of recognition still is a valid one. It can be used with tremendous effectiveness when carried out honestly, appropriately, and with imagination. There are many excellent opportunities in the school public relations field, but many of them are lost because they have not been identified or are mismanaged.

Teacher Recognition Day, held in May in New York, paid dividends in New York City largely because of advance planning and heavy support from the system's public relations office. Macy's and Abram & Straus, for example, carried full-page newspaper advertisements. Advance proofs of the ads went up on school bulletin boards throughout the system. Page 1 attention was given the event in the system *Staff Bulletin* almost two weeks before "the Day," featuring a message by Superintendent Bernard E. Donovan and a story of his surprise visit to a teacher who is retiring after half a century of service. The day before "the Day," Donovan greeted three teachers in his office at a ceremony well covered by the press. In addition to the sending of many letters, telegrams, and corsages, "the Day" itself featured student and parent testimonial sessions, luncheons, writing projects, etc.

Overline on the Macy's ad: "You could not do as simple a thing as read this . . . if someone had not taught you."

A utility company, WTIG Radio, and the Massillon, Ohio, schools teamed up to dramatize scholarship achievement recently by selecting an "All-City Scholarship Team" of five top-ranking high school students in science, math, English, social studies,

and foreign languages. Team members, selected by faculty members, were honored at a high school assembly program which included a 45-minute live broadcast by WTIG. The radio station reported receiving heavy favorable mail.

Scores of business firms helped support the annual Student Science Fair of the Chicago schools. The 42-page program for the 15th yearly competition was prepared by Montgomery Ward & Co. It included names, grades, and schools of 248 exhibitors, awards, judges, scholarships, special tours, etc.

"Publications Day" at the Clark County Schools, Las Vegas, Nevada, was developed by Ross Tucker, publications coordinator, as a project to help improve both internal and external relationships. With student newspaper and yearbook advisers, he mapped out a six-hour program which brought 200 students together with the community's mass media representatives for discussions, displays, and exhibits. Student awards were presented at an afternoon session. This one is a "natural" for many school districts.

A twist on this idea recently was produced by Charles M. Ratzer, editor of the *Jefferson County Schools* newsletter, Louisville, Kentucky. He devoted an entire issue to student writing, and featured on page 1 the names of 27 student publications together with their editors and faculty sponsors.

Editor William Weber, Centinela Valley Union High School District, Hawthorne, California, used a complete issue of the district newsletter, *The News*, to feature individual head shots of 46 citizen advisory committee members and to tell about the group's purposes and accomplishments.

Vernon Almlie, public relations chairman of the Rochester, Minnesota, Education Association, thought it might be a good idea to set up some kind of community recognition for career teachers. He talked over the idea informally with the public relations director of the local International Business Machines Corp. plant. Things moved rapidly. Printed invitations from the Chamber of Commerce, IBM, and other firms invited key leaders to attend a reception for all teachers in the community with 10 or more years of service.

49 BRIGHT IDEAS FOR YOUR PR PROGRAM

• When high school seniors take over municipal officials' positions for a day at Johnson City, Tennessee, included are posts of the board of education and superintendent of schools.

• A special column, "For Parents Only," is included in the weekly student newspaper, *The Governor*, published by Farrington High School, Honolulu. It includes PTA news and other items of parent interest, according to Haruo Oda, journalism teacher.

• Open house is held for entering kindergarten students at Brockport, New York, well in advance of the start of school. Children tour the building, have an opportunity to sit in a school bus, and are served refreshments.

• Custodians of the Union Free School District No. 17, Franklin Square, New York, worked with the administration to produce and distribute their own handbook.

• The telephone dial-an-answer service used at Santa Fe, New Mexico, during a bond issue campaign was so popular that it may be used on a continuing basis to explain aspects of the school program.

• When the Dearborn, Michigan, school offices were moved to a new address, old stationery with the change indicated was used to issue invitations to an open house program.

• A bank at Wooster, Ohio, carries a regular "Meet Your Teacher" feature in its monthly bulletin.

• More than 500 grandparents and great-grandparents visited seven Menominee, Michigan, elementary schools on a senior citizens day. It was held on Abraham Lincoln's birthday . . . Senior citizens at Aurora, Illinois, were picked up by bus at their club headquarters and taken on a four-hour tour and program about the school system.

• All district employees, teaching and nonteaching, attend a massive preschool convocation at Fort Worth, Texas. Civic leaders also are invited.

• On the first day of school, each student at Alton, Illinois, received a billfold-size school calendar and message urging parents to visit the schools and to feel free to request information.

• At Cedar Grove, New Jersey, the board of education invited new teachers, administrators, and secretaries to attend a dinner at which one board member sat at each table. After each course was served, board members changed tables so that they met all new teachers by the end of

the evening.

• Fall quarter student teachers and teachers new to West Valley District 208, Yakima, Washington, met for half a day prior to the regular staff workshop, talked with administrators, and toured buildings of the district.

• When the picture or name of a pupil appears in the West Valley newsletter, *Know Your Schools*, extra copies of the issue are sent to parents with the suggestion that friends or relatives might like to have them.

• A teaser lapel card distributed at Columbus, Ohio, prior to the Presidential election said on one side: "I'm Going To Vote For . . ." The reverse side said: "School Bond Issue!"

• A 10-part Teacher-to-Parent series of articles about the educational program, prepared for the *Fresno, California, Guide* by Richard Falls, Fresno Teachers Association PR committee member, aroused so much interest that it was reprinted and a second series begun.

• A letter is sent to parents of new unmarried women teachers at Barrington, Illinois, by Superintendent Robert M. Finley, expressing appreciation for having the young ladies on the staff and inviting parents to visit him.

• Finley sends a card to parents of new babies offering congratulations and the information that a desk is being "reserved" for the youngster.

• The four-page monthly Barrington system tabloid, *Around the Schools*, is distributed to residents as a supplement of the *Barrington, Illinois, Courier-Review*.

• Individual photos of all teachers in Taylorville, Illinois, were carried in a special five-page supplement of the *Taylorville, Illinois, Breeze-Courier*.

• Monthly "in-the-field" meetings of the Torrance, California, school board have been scheduled to be held in the district's five high schools in an effort to familiarize more persons with the workings of the board.

• Citizens advisory committee members received special "certificates of service" from the board of education of Rose Tree Union District, Media, Pennsylvania, at a joint parent-teacher council meeting.

• Individual board members at Enid, Oklahoma, at the end of each year are presented with a bound volume which includes the agenda, minutes of meetings, budget reports, policies adopted, and issues of the special newsletter produced by Superintendent Carl Wagner to keep members informed. It is presented as a personal gift and represents the record of member services for the year.

• The Children's May Show, an outdoor art display held on Memorial Day at Moreland School, Shaker Heights, Ohio, invites the entire neighborhood to take part. Children from preschool age through high school are invited to enter up to three works of art. Also taking part are roving barbershop quartets, itinerant artists, and children's choral groups.

• To help assure balanced atten-

tion in reporting student achievements, the Clinton County Republican News, St. Johns, Michigan, carries a bimonthly "student spotlight" feature about a top student selected by the high school student council.

• A different school staff each month is responsible for preparation of an educational display for the Fairfield, Connecticut, board of education meeting room in the administration building.

• The principals of the 13 buildings in the North Tonawanda, New York, system on "Teacher Recognition Day" visit each class to present a flower from the school board to the teacher and to say a few words to the students about contributions made by teachers.

• Each month the Overland Rotary Club in suburban St. Louis recognizes an outstanding senior boy at Ritenour High School. The club president calls for the student at school, takes him to the luncheon, and returns him to school.

• A scholarship has been established by the Ritenour Optimist Club for students who are outstanding in student council work.

• Administrators and teachers at Pittsburg, California, have received a listing of all books and pamphlets on school PR which are included in the system's professional library, located in the administration building.

• It was easy for Oak Park, Michigan, school officials to locate each new family arriving in the community in order to present a 16-page fact and picture booklet about the school system. The municipal water department provides the system with names of each new subscriber.

• Campaign speakers bureaus usually vanish with the election, but not at Alton, Illinois. Organizations in the community were invited to request a speaker after the bond issue had passed to give a progress report on building plans, bidding procedures, facilities to be included, etc.

• Teachers who apply for positions in Roanoke County, Virginia, receive a copy of the *Roanoke County Education Association News* . . . When a new teacher signs a contract to join the Akron, Ohio, system, he immediately is placed on the mailing list to receive the weekly staff publication, *Off the Chalkboard.*

• PTA council presidents and officers in the area served by El Camino College, California, attend an annual luncheon where, during a two-hour period, they meet the president and directors, view a new film about the campus, and witness a program by top music or theater arts students.

• A weekly film series on the preparation of children for reading was aired for mothers of kindergarten children and kindergarten teachers over WGTE-TV, Toledo, Ohio.

• Every Wednesday night at Martinsville, Virginia, High School, the principal, an assistant, or a guidance counselor is available to confer with parents unable to come to the school during the day.

• When a survey showed that Midland Park, New Jersey, Junior-Senior High School was involved in

50 different money-raising projects and events, a committee was formed of teachers and school-associated groups to bring about reform. Major fund-raising was limited to an annual student carnival. Each grade level class organization was permitted to have two additional fund-raising events per year. The school's magazine drive and door-to-door solicitations were eliminated.

- Coffee is served by the Midland Park Education Association at the November board of education meeting during which there is special observance of American Education Week.
- The Oakwood High School, Dayton, Ohio, newsletter for parents includes news briefs about the successes of graduates in college and on the job.
- PTA meetings at Oak School, Los Altos, California, offer baby-sitting service with paid teen-agers supervised by a parent. Meetings are held at cafeteria tables with coffee and cookies. There is no reading of minutes or reports; they are mimeographed and passed out. Meetings start promptly at 8 p.m. and end at 9:15 p.m. Each meeting is planned carefully to feature a top speaker or lively discussion. Crowds have reached 900 persons.
- The traditional annual visit of parents to classrooms at Garfield Elementary School, Casper, Wyoming, was scrapped for a program in the gymnasium at which there were six demonstrations by teachers of new teaching methods in use in the classrooms.
- Children at Maple Heights, Ohio, will be protected if there is a school fire during bad weather. Arrangements have been made to take classes to assigned homes adjacent to the school until firemen say the building can be occupied or transportation is arranged to take the youngsters home. . . . A report card insert announced "School Visitation Week" at Maple Heights. This was supplemented by invitations from each school which included a time and date suggested by the teacher for the parent to visit his child's classroom.
- Vestal, New York, school publications which go to offices of physicians, beauty parlors, etc., have a slip attached inviting readers to have their names added to the mailing list.
- One of the publications prepared for a citizens conference on education at Anne Arundel County, Annapolis, Maryland, was a round-up of descriptions of experimental projects going on in the school district.
- The telephone answering service of King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, schools is used not only for announcing early school dismissals or closing but also for interscholastic game scores, announcements of school plays, science fairs, etc.
- The inservice program for Mamaroneck, New York, teachers is called "Little Mamaroneck U." in publications and publicity.
- The West Virginia Education Association has stock layouts for county levy and bond issue promotion leaflets. School officials rough in the facts and figures. Then WVEA produces the leaflets at cost.